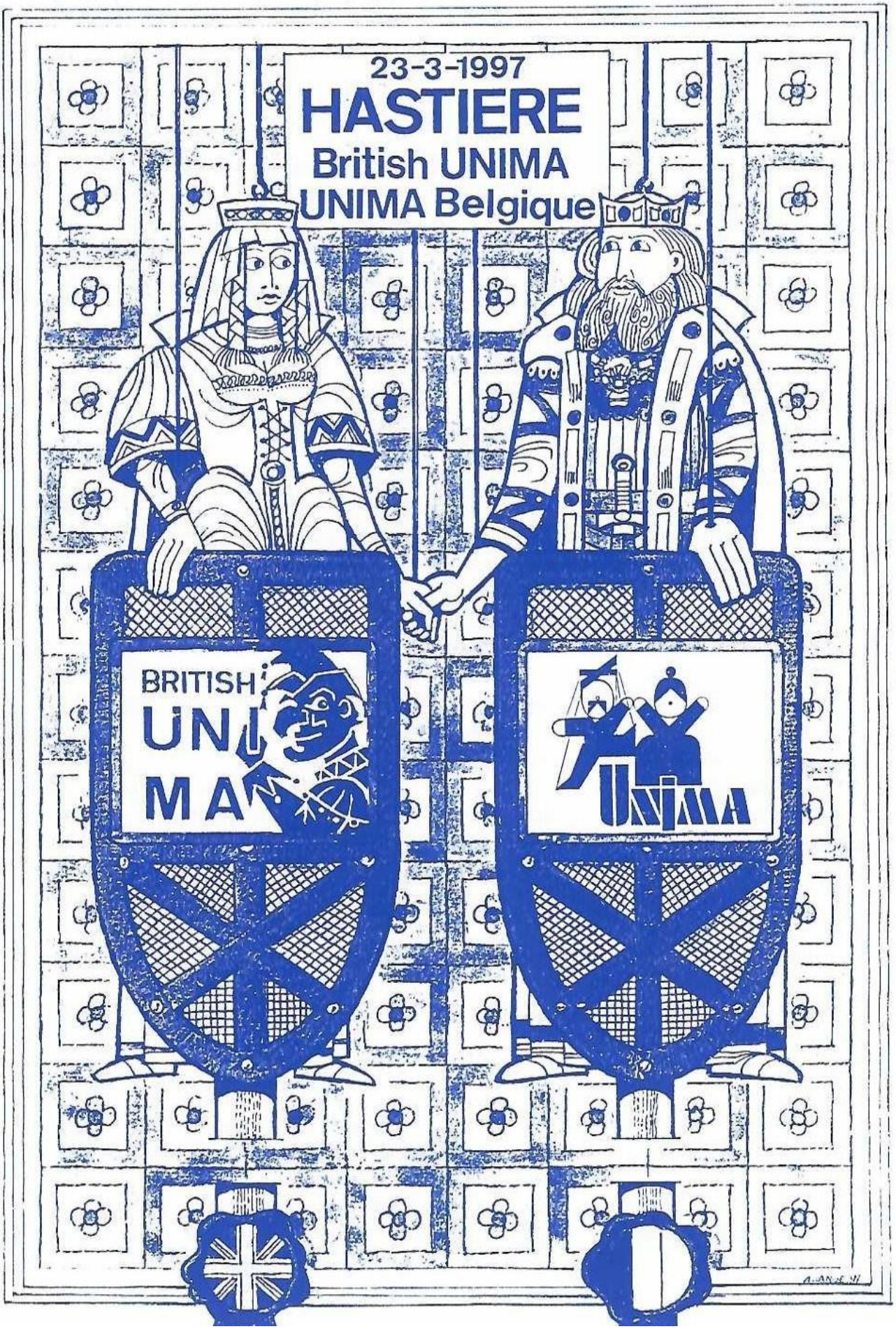
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BRITISH UNIMA CENTRE BULLETIN

EDITOR - ROBERT FOWLER

MARCH 1997 NO 94

It may be that another editor would wish to state at length his personal credo on beginning the editorship of this publication, but I, having now sat in the editorial chair for all of five weeks, feel no such compulsion -- for it would be redundant. I find it impossible to disagree with the principles which seem to me to have guided John Blundall since he took over as editor with Issue No. 38, way back in July 1978. I hope I am not distorting his views if I say, based on my personal experience of him and the *Bulletin*, that he has always believed that any UNIMA publication worth its salt should have an international rather than a parochial slant; he embraces all of the arts, being acutely aware of their interplay and alive to the fact that a visit to an art gallery, museum, or theatre can be just as, if not sometimes more, rewarding than looking at puppets; and he is passionately committed to the view that practice and theory (which he himself embodies) should go hand in hand. He is also concerned with quality, an attitude particularly influenced by cultures found east of the British Isles. His approach to cultural difference is to embrace it -- discriminatingly. I hope therefore that in the main you will experience an agreeable sense of continuity in the magazine in my hands.

When, at the Committee meeting in Warrington in March, where John's resignation as editor was announced, I was asked to take provisional charge of the *Bulletin* -- one of the organization's prime assets -- I accepted but said I should have to "see how things go." It is, after all, very difficult to follow in John's wake (it would take far too long for me to list all those areas where my knowledge and expertise are much wanting by comparison).

However, I should not want this to sound like, nor is it, a valedictory -- he will be continuing to make a matchless contribution to our organization, as the new Chair's words will make clear.

Members will also know that John recently moved to Scotland to become artistic director at the Scottish Mask and Puppet Centre and also participate in the puppet theatre arts course set up and run at Anniesland College by the SMPC. England's loss is definitely Scotland's gain here. The SMPC has fine facilities and bold expansion plans -- enough in themselves to warrant a move there -- but Scotland's spirit has also withstood the onslaughts of the last 18 years better than we have south of the border. It strikes me as an inspiring and invigorating place for an artist to work.

The SMPC is now also home to John's magnificent collection of puppets and puppetry-related material, part of which was put on display at two locations in Glasgow, including the Centre, at the end of last year (which those of us who attended the BrUNIMA Committee meeting in Glasgow were able to enjoy). In short, the SMPC,

where puppeteers always enjoy a warm welcome, should be a must on any puppeteer's itinerary. So give Malcolm Knight a ring and take yourself along to the SMPC at 8-10 Balcarres Avenue, Kelvindale.

I should like to quote from a letter which I received from Dave Arthur, literally within days of John's resignations, and which, I feel, captures the sentiments of us all:

"I feel that I can't let John Blundall's resignation from the editorship of the BrUNIMA *Bulletin* pass without saying how invaluable has been his contribution to BrUNIMA, puppetry in general and, on a personal level, to me in particular.

"Luckily I've accumulated many years' back issues of the *Bulletin* and together they comprise a formidable encyclopaedia of international puppetry history, philosophy and technique.

"John's immense personal knowledge in all areas of puppetry coupled with his worldwide circle of friends and acquaintances, on whom he writes with such affection, respect and understanding, has over the years opened a window onto the world of puppetry for which I will always be grateful. I have learnt more about puppetry and received more inspiration from John than from any other source."

John would be the first to tell you that as editor you are hostage to what members supply you with. You can and *ideally* should only do so much yourself. Editing is subject to a deal of ad hocism and "on the hoofism," and you members can make the path a lot smoother by supplying bountiful material -- *and in good time*. Not all of it may be suitable, but we do now have two regular publications and will do our best to accommodate. I know that the *Bulletin* comes out only every four months and that passions may cool betweentimes, but if you disagree with a writer's point of view or wish to correct a "fact" or, perhaps, expand on some topic broached, do feel free to do so. These magazines will work best if there is dialogue, and it does not always have to be complimentary: as human beings we all prefer bouquets to brickbats, but negative as well as positive feedback is essential if there is to be improvement. I should like there to be much more two-way traffic. You only have to look at our list of members and their interests to see what potential BrUNIMA has. The organization would benefit by harnessing it more efficiently, although the *Bulletin* is, clearly, only one forum for this.

Finally, let me thank all of the contributors who have helped me, at short notice, to put this *Bulletin* together and to express my particular appreciation to Ray DaSilva for all of his hard work and soft words of advice.

Non-Ex-Cathedra Remarks

Ray DaSilva

The resignation of John Blundall as chair of the British Centre of UNIMA came as a shock to me and to most of the Committee. However, John has assured us that he continues to be fully committed to the principles of UNIMA in a practical way, and we are well aware that he cares very much about British puppetry. It is therefore with pleasure that I am able to tell you that John has agreed to accept the position of Honorary President of BrUNIMA.

I thank the Committee for their confidence in electing me to this office, which I have accepted with some apprehension. Any skills and experience which I might bring to it are unlikely to compensate for the vast storehouse of knowledge which John has provided during the last 19 years. His, will indeed be a difficult act to follow. Nevertheless, I too am devoted to the principles of UNIMA and intend to do the best I can for you. I would particularly like to see a positive development in the services

the organization provides to its members, and also in the role which this Centre plays on the international stage. You have a dedicated Committee, and a new start has already begun.

This *Bulletin* contains information about a number of events which BrUNIMA has initiated or in which we are involved. But the organization of events on its own, is not going to help the majority of professional puppeteers, who have to weigh up the cost of travel and their time, unless such events are well-worth attending. Furthermore, within our membership we have amateur puppeteers, enthusiasts, those involved in research, and so on. I am keen to see that we provide the best service to all our members, and therefore invite you to write to me about anything you think BrUNIMA should be doing for you.

Twinning Surprise!

Ray DaSilva

We knew the Belgians were famous for their hospitality, but the treatment received by the BrUNIMA party on the recent trip lead by John Phillips, culminating in an unexpected twinning, exceeded all expectations.

To seal the arrangement BrUNIMA has invited a party from Belgian UNIMA to come to Britain next May, when we shall try to give them as good a time as they gave us, hoping for the widest participation of our membership.

The 18 people on our trip very happily agreed to contribute toward the second half of the "twinning ceremony," and the "BrUNIMA Hospitality Fund" has been opened and already stands at just over £900.

There will be more news about the Belgian connection in the next *Bulletin*, I hope; meanwhile please send all contributions, suggestions, offers of involvement etc to

The above new stamp was received recently on a letter from Freek Neirynck, chairman, deputy director and general coordinator of the Europees Figurenteatercentrum in Ghent, Belgium. It is particularly timely because the illustration depicts puppets from the Musée de la Vie Wallonne, which the English puppetourers visited. There are numerous puppet stamps from all over the world, and a few UNIMA members have begun to collect them. Notable collections in this country include those of members Roy Tomlinson and Ray DaSilva. It was a pity that time did not allow the British party to visit the Ghent Centre. Maybe, next time round.

Belgium

John Furse, writer and critic, asked me to point out that the following piece, produced in double-quick time, is an "outsider's" view, although he has in fact just joined BrUNIMA post-Belgium. Some of the references will be transparent only to those who went. The next issue will contain detailed coverage of the trip, for which contributions are requested.

Behind the Scenes

John Furse

Liège 19 3 97 CIRQUE DIVERS -- bus to Outremeuse, *shepherded* by Georges Vetters and 'Magic' Jean-Claude. Private room and hostess Angèle. The perfect welcome and introduction to Liégeois hospitality.

20 3 97 WORKSHOP PRACTICE – bus to Seraing and the home of craftsman puppet-maker Claude Deletrez and his large Airedale. Claude carves limewood and takes 90 minutes to complete a typical head. Fascinating to watch him at work and to observe the controlled precision of his method. His substantial family paint and dress the finished figures. That's the way he does it.

20 3 97 CHEZ TCHANTCHES – to within walking distance of Outremeuse and the much-altered Musée Tchantchès. Display cabinets now line the foyer, and within the theatre itself paintings and photographs document the genealogy of the building and its past inhabitants. Brief show involving the indefatigable Tchantchès, and later the inevitable *toasting* in Pekèt. The theatre bar proved popular and later the owner-chef at a nearby Lebanese restaurant was somewhat startled by the unheralded arrival of a party of excitable puppeteers. "The English are even madder than the Liégois" was the verdict.

21 3 97 LA VIE WALLONNE – on foot and a viewing of the truly splendid collection of traditional marionettes of the Musée de la Vie Wallonne. *What-the-butler-saw* images of past customs are a constant attraction. The museum has a small puppet theatre, where we saw a snatch of a play and had -- courtesy of the museum director -- a back-stage visit. Georges Vetters had a little difficulty in discerning the sex of a "Hen-Cock-Hen" in the cluttered storeroom. Cockerels do not lay eggs! Postcards were purchased in the shop, which stocks marionettes by Claude Deletrez. The museum has an authentic guillotine in full working order.

Rumour has it that the evening visit to the Théâtre Royal de Toone was eventful for those who elected to travel later to Brussels and even later -- earlier perhaps -- back to Liège. No comment!

22 3 97 ALICE IN MECHELEN -- coach and a seemingly endless straight road to Mechels Stadspoppentheater and *Alice en Alice in het land van Verwondering* (*Alice and Alice in Wonderland*). Change of scene -- another language -- Black Theatre of a sophisticated kind. State-subsidized but a truly family Contryn set-up. *Ad hoc* carving and construction -- lightweight materials contrived in a spacious workshop. True theatre in a once-upon-a-time cinema not far from Antwerp.

23 3 97 TWINNING BUSINESS -- coach to Hastière via dramatic Dinant. Flags flying, business completed -- BrUNIMA and Belgian UNIMA twinned. Visit to nearby collection of Hubert Roman -- popular TV puppets an obvious attraction. All wish him well with his heart op. Delayed performance back in Hastière, and the *scenic route* home. Close to the Hôtel l'UNIVERS two young women somewhat sparsely clad -- but well lit -- waved merrily from the window of what appeared to be a traditional local *tableau vivant*. They seemed all too well aware of the business of twinning.

24 3 97 Liège FOND FAREWELLS – particularly to "Gorgeous George," "Magic," Hubert Roman and those others who had made the visit so memorable -- so friendly -- so perfectly pitched.

Another Belgian Connection

In May and June Freehand Theatre (Lizzie Allen and Simon Hatfield) is making its fourth visit to European schools in Brussels and environs, with *Norman's Ark*.

The following article by the Beresfords on their, earlier Belgium trip has had, unfortunately, to be published in truncated form; however, the full text is available on request. Material from Kallemoeie theatre programs, also supplied by Kath and Ted, is being translated from Flemish and will be incorporated in the next issue.

Bruges, February 1997: Further Adventures in Belgium

Ted and Kath Beresford

Thursday -- Arrive at our hosts, Marten and Kaat Lierman, in Bruges for the second of our winter workshops on marionette making and manipulation. Marten organized the course along with Marc Beuten of the Pierwit Puppet Theatre.

Friday -- Drive to Zelzate, half-way to Ghent, to give a 90-minute marionette show to patients at a psychiatric hospital. There was no language problem, partly because most Belgians speak English but mainly because our show -- *Chloe's Circus*, followed by *Dance Around the World* -- is very visual.

Saturday morning -- Pick up a friend of Marten's who is working on the restoration of the Church of the Sacred Heart in Ostend. While he was working on the stained-glass windows he had noticed a cellar full of marionettes and gained permission for us to see them. Unfortunately, the person in whose charge they are could not attend so it was frustrating not to be able to ask the many questions we had. Literally hundreds of 35/45cm-high marionettes hung in PLASTIC bags, the composition of the feet and hands rotting and some of the fabrics in an advanced state of decay. In another part were at least three touring theatres, backcloths, and lighting equipment. We did ascertain that it was the Kallemoeie Theatre (*kallemoeie* is the local name for "puppet"), which began in 1928, had various stops and starts, but was around in 1954 -- the last record seems to be 1984. Puppetwise, it was one of the saddest sights -- masses of marionettes of the style we are familiar with, not the traditional stangpoppen (rod marionettes).

Sunday -- To Ghent. Although the marionettes were not working that day, we had permission to look around the Museumpoppenteater "Spelleke van de Folklore." Later that day we all walked around the beautiful medieval town of Bruges. We also spent a lot of time getting everything ready for the course starting next day.

The following week of marionette-making -- more advanced than last year (although only one student opted to carve a head) as we had some "returnees" -- and preparing for an individual "show" went well. Considering the short notice and manipulation and rehearsal time, our students did remarkably well. Proceedings ended with farewell speeches and exchanges of gifts: Kath received a hand-decorated tray full of goodies while I was presented with a Pierke, the Ghent rod-puppet equivalent of Tchantchès, from the theatre museum we had visited.

Sunday -- Are taken to the Folk Museum in the Porte de Hal tower, where they have a wonderful collection of all types of Belgian puppets.

A couple of days of free time.

Wednesday -- Drive leisurely through Belgium and France to the soon-to-be puppet theatre/shop/museum of Phillipe and Frederieke Malin of Espace Marionnettes, Buire le Sec, inland from Le Touquet. They have taken over a typical farm. All the buildings are connected: the theatre will be in the barn, with its own guest room for visiting puppeteers.

Thursday -- It's back through the Chunnel in the little Daihatsu van.

Puppet Theatre on the Front Lines of World War II

We publish the following letter received by our General Secretary from Ursula Bach and Bianca Oestmann, Projektbüro, Puppentheater-Museum Berlin, Karl Marx-Strasse 135, D-12043 Berlin

"The museums for puppet theatres of Berlin and Moscow plan a joint exhibition provisionally titled "Puppet Theatre on the Front Lines of World War II" and a corresponding catalogue. The exhibition will open in Berlin in September 1997 and then be shown in Moscow and probably St Petersburg....

"We -- Bianca Oestmann (theatre scientist) and Ursula Bach (political scientist) -- as assistant scientific lecturers from the Puppentheater-Museum Berlin are organizing this exhibition. Even though our project focuses on the staging of puppet theatre plays on the German and Soviet front lines, we also want to include the puppet theatres of the other Axis powers and the Western allies. We also keep in mind the puppet theatre scene in the countries then occupied by Germany, and the puppet theatres in POW camps.

"We are interested in the following questions concerning the English puppet theatres during World War II: was there any puppet theatre entertainment for the English front-line troops during World War II? If so, how was the front-line service of the puppet players organized, and what kind of propagandistic contents and concepts of the enemy were conveyed? Which kinds of anti-Nazi portrayals, e.g. puppets caricaturing the Nazis, especially Hitler, were there in the English puppet theatres during and also preceding World War II?

"We would be most grateful if you could furnish us with information on this topic.

"If you should know someone who has been working intensely in this field, we would be very grateful if you could contact him/her.

"Furthermore, we would like to ask you to give us references as to already-existing exhibitions concerning this topic in British museums and archives (e.g. theatre puppets indicating a former propagandistic use, photographs or film material of puppet theatre performances of this time, programmes and so on).

"We very much hope that you will be interested in our project. We would appreciate any suggestions/references -- even the smallest ones. Since we have a deadline, we hope to hear from you soon. You can telephone us on 0049/30/6809-3603 or fax us on 0049/30/6809-3775. Thanking you very much in advance for any help you may be able to give us."

Septembre 1944
Cartoon from the Liège weekly,
Tchantchès No4, Sep 6, 1947

I happen to know that this topic falls plumb in the middle of the research interest of member John Giles, who is also the recently appointed Guild Archivist, but there are doubtless others who could help the German-Russian venture. My reading of the wartime years of Gerald Morice's column in *The World's Fair* suggests, for example, a fair amount of puppetry activity on the home front, with, among others, Percy Press Senior's "Punch in khaki" (recently revived by his son Percy and to be seen at Covent Garden) contributing to military and civilian morale here, but with little if anything on the front line itself. I should be very pleased to hear from readers on this if they contribute something to the exhibition.

Tom Howard

(19 Jan 1904-21 Jan 1997)

John Blundall

For as long as I can remember, Tom Howard was always around during the many and various puppet theatre events, both national and international. He was a very quiet and private man whose dedication and integrity were unquestionable.

He was a most reliable member of the Council of the British Puppet and Model Theatre Guild, he was also the Guild Archivist, a post which demanded a great deal of work and commitment, which he so willingly dedicated for the benefit of future generations of puppeteers. He carried out the task of cataloguing the Guild Collection and oversaw its final transference to the Theatre Museum in London. A fine catalogue of the Guild Collection, which Tom produced, is available from the Museum. As well as his archivistic work for the Guild, he also developed a private collection of puppet theatre material, which has been donated to the Theatre Museum.

Emblem of Chelsea Puppet Theatre Group

Tom played a very significant part in the development of BrUNIMA. He was one of the British Puppet and Model Theatre Guild representatives on what was known as the Joint International Committee, a steering group which committed itself to the formation of the British Centre of UNIMA. In 1962, at the time of the great Punch Celebration in London, the International Executive Committee of UNIMA was invited to take part and hold one of its statutory business meetings. It was then that the JIC was given sanction to form a British centre of UNIMA.

For many years, until failing health, he was the General Secretary of BrUNIMA. Once again he dedicated much time to the post, often a thankless task, but one which he undertook with the utmost commitment, and concern, for upholding the finest principles of the organization. He was meticulous in all aspects of his work. Tom was made an Honorary Member of UNIMA.

Most people only ever saw Tom in his active administrative roles, but there were other sides to him which few people knew about, one of them his love of the ballet. It was always a great pleasure to sit with him, frequently over tea in the Arts Theatre, talking on many aspects of the dance, about which he was extremely knowledgeable. During my many and various dialogues with him a common interest in a universal language was frequently the subject of conversation. Esperanto is one such language, and for many years Tom was the UK Correspondent for the International Esperanto Society of Puppeteers. A number of Puppeteers' Summer Schools were organized by Tom -- they were always very popular.

Tom frequently wrote material for various journals about his puppetry work and research. In addition to the Guild Catalogue, he also wrote a significant list of Puppet Films for Hire in Great Britain and an International Directory of Puppet Theatres.

An interest in the technical side of the puppet theatre consumed a great deal of Tom's time and energy, and he tirelessly experimented with lighting control units more ideally suited to small-scale puppet theatre. To ensure that many of these experiments were used in a proper context he formed the Chelsea Puppet Theatre Group, which held its gatherings at the Chelsea Community Centre, on the King's Road, where they constructed a 22-seat working puppet theatre and gave performances to invited audiences.

Although he was often a difficult man, he commanded the greatest respect from his many collaborators. During the later years of his life he found it more and more difficult to travel, even so, he remained interested and committed to the art of the puppet theatre and the organizations to which he devoted so much valued time, energy, and personal resources. Many individuals kept in contact with him and made personal visits. He had an encyclopaedic mind, and was always generous in his exchange of information, help, and support.

Streetwise

Sir George Gardiner, the deselected right-wing Europhobe for Reigate, has a lively turn of phrase: "Last week we descended to pure pantomime -- Widow Twanky Clarke shouting 'Oh, yes, we will!' Aladdin Stephen Dorrell shouting: 'Oh, no we won't!' This is no way to lead a party, let alone a proud country." However, it was his slightly earlier remark about Major being Clarke's ventriloquist's dummy which caused me to ponder. This was because the American ventriloquist David Strassman, a great success at last year's Edinburgh Festival, was simultaneously wowing audiences at the Apollo Theatre in Shaftesbury Avenue ("think Ray Allen as directed by David Cronenberg," according to one critic). His malevolent, foul-mouthed dummy, Chuck Wood, is very far from a passive character, and, when left on his own on the stage at the end of the show, his animatronically enhanced persona (Strassman is a self-confessed "computer nerd") even seems to come to life. (*Dead of Night*, including Alberto Cavalcanti's creepy "The Ventriloquist's Dummy," starring Michael Redgrave, was coincidentally run late on Channel 4 around the same time.)

For all his street cool, Chuck too suffers from the "Pinocchio Syndrome" -- he wants to be "real." Edi Majaron (from Slovenia, chair of the UNIMA Commission for Scientific Research) told me as we chatted over lunch about Tiplady's pleasing *Pinocchio*, performed in Brighton during *visions*-96, that in his own production Pinocchio subversively wants to remain a puppet.

But perhaps Sir George, who would have known one of the golden ages of vent acts (on radio!) should have known better anyway because, for all Chuck's NASA-engineered innards, *Woodentops* (Radio 2, 1 10 96), an hour-long programme, hosted by Ray Alan "with the help of Lord Charles," revealed just how varied and sophisticated some of the much earlier British and American speciality acts, whether on stage radio, or television, could be: the 12-14 pneumatically operated dummies must have been a prodigious sight. The programme covered every aspect of ventriloquism -- its history, anthropology, sociology, psychology, figure-making, personalities -- with contributions from many notable people, past and present, in the field. I hope it is not invidious to mention that I found the comments of Geoff Felix particularly astute and well informed. In other words, try to get hold of a recording or wait for "another opportunity to hear

There is of course no guarantee at all that good work will ensue when "fine artists" enter the domain of puppetry. Susan Hiller, for example, despite her background as an anthropologist, gets Punch (and violence) wrong, in my view, which is not to say that her video piece, *An Entertainment* (now in the Tate, as I recall), lacks interest. However, approaching from a different angle and working within a different context, they can sometimes offer insight. It is from this perspective that I mention the photographic work exploring "ventriloquism, puppets, and the phenomena of animated human beings" of Laurie Simmons. A three-page article on her by Don Cameron entitled "Recent Works by Laurie Simmons: Informed by Uneasiness and Indefinable Malaise" appeared not long ago in *Flash Art*.

However, there are other ways to vent your spleen than that employed by Sir George of England -- direct action being one. You may remember my referring to London motorway protesters concealed under the skirts of a tall puppet. Protesters went underground to thwart progress on the A30 dual carriageway in Devon, and there was a puppetry connection there too.

"Swampy," quickly designer-suited by the media, may have been the best known of the subterranean army, but "Animal," *nom de guerre* of Ellenor Hutson, is the more intriguing from our viewpoint, for her father, who supports her all the way, makes a living doing Punch and Judy shows. Is it any coincidence either that another companion of theirs was "Muppet Dave," or am I a conspiracy theorist?

A *Sunday Times* Election Special poster of Thatcher as Punch was one of the items auctioned at the Harlequin auction in March. A *Daily Telegraph* cartoon (30 January) featured Tony Blair as Punch, but the opposition, in the shape of the baby being boxed on the ear and told to keep quiet, was the NEC. *Plus ça change, plus ce n'est pas la même chose.*

Do you ever get the impression that life is made too easy for satirists? As if Netanyahu was not having enough trouble with the Arafat puppet doing wonders for the Palestinian leader's popularity in the raunchy TV show Hartzufim, where the couple are lovers who have spent years failing to reach a climax (see Ian Black's article, *The Guardian*, 24 1 97), *The Telegraph* reported the same month that an interview given by the PM's scandal-prone third wife, Sarah, at the height of the controversy over the sacking of the family nannies, is being used to train police to spot body language that shows a person may be lying.

Kukly, Russia's Spitting Image, are still pulling the knicker elastic. Their Yeltsin birthday tribute depicted an ailing, befuddled president at his out-of-town sanatorium searching for the little briefcase containing the nuclear button. When he eventually finds it, he confuses it with a telephone and tells Chief of Staff Chubays, who is playing the Moonlight Sonata at a funereal tempo, "I can press the button to call who I want." Boris is worried by the spectre of Communism, but is informed by the since-promoted Chubays that "The only spectre haunting Europe today is tourism." Prime Minister Chernomyrdin, who arrives late for the celebration, clutching a special edition of *Izvestiya* containing only good news -- to be taken "three times a day after meals" -- suddenly turns into Stalin.

Magic Moments

Royal Albert Memorial Museum and Art Gallery, Exeter

Showing approximately 300 puppets and incorporating live performance and video, the above-titled exhibition will explore puppetry over the last three centuries.

Historical material from national collections, including the Theatre Museum, the Bethnal Green Museum of Childhood, and the Puppet Centre Trust, will illustrate the development of European puppets from the 18th century to the mass appeal of television shows. An overview of international puppetmaking and performance techniques will encompass examples from Asia such as Bunraku, Burmese marionettes, and Vietnamese water puppets. It is hoped that the exhibition will appeal both to children and adults.

If any member has video footage of Javanese rod puppet and Indian marionette shows or photographs of Vietnamese water puppets they would be willing to lend, please contact John Madin, Curator of Decorative Art.

The exhibition is on Sat 2 Aug to Sat 1 Nov, 1000-1700 hours, and is free save when afternoon workshops, mainly for children, are in session. Please ring 01392 265858 for further details.

Gordon Shapley

We are very pleased to be able to say that BrUNIMA Honorary Member Gordon, Shapley, who suffered a mild stroke, is now out of hospital and staying with his daughter in Cambridgeshire.

New Members

Vyvyan Bennett, Sweden.

John Furse, Plymouth. Interests: writing/critical comment; research supervision.

Pavla Rowan, Glasgow. Puppeteer, artist, teacher. Languages: Czech, German, Spanish.

Mary Walker, Holmfirth.

Ann Scadding, Hertfordshire. Artist, designer and maker of puppets.

Committee News

Resignations: Malcolm Knight, Simon Palmer, and Margaret Richardson.
Cooptions: Cariad Astles, Sarah Wright.
Officer change: Glyn Edwards -- Vice-Chair.

The Colour of Sculpture 1840-1910

John Phillips

The exhibition at the Henry Moore Institute in Leeds (13 Dec 1996-6 Apr 1997) has previously been shown at the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam and is mounted by the two galleries in collaboration. It may be unusual to review a "Fine Art" exhibition in this *Bulletin* but this excellent show has many aspects that impinge upon those of puppetry and should be of interest to all puppeteers and toy-theatre enthusiasts because it deals with varying forms of Naturalism. The central theme being mimesis and verisimilitude between the polarities of the ideal and the real or what Plato called essence and appearance.

A particularly lavish catalogue has been produced to accompany the exhibition (available as a separate publication), edited by Andreas Blühm, head of exhibitions at the Van Gogh Museum, and containing a series of essays by the editor, Wolfgang Drost, Philip Ward-Jackson, Alison Yarrington, Emanuelle Héran, and June Hargrove. Not only is it extremely well researched but it also contains an extensive bibliography.

It is sometimes difficult to realise how many themes that we are now comfortable and familiar with were once so intensively argued. Despite the growing realization during the 18th century that much sculpture of the past had been painted, arguments as to what extent sculpture should remain "pure" continued into the second half of the 19th century and to some extent even into the middle of this one. These arguments centred around the classical tradition, "high" and "low" art and the differences between a work of art and a waxwork.

Within the exhibition one can see a progressive shedding of Neoclassicism and the "beau ideal" culminating in the erotic fantasies of the Symbolists. The growth in [illegible] exactly paralleled by that of marionettes, which reached its peak just before the end of the 19th century.

In striving after greater naturalism John Gibson covered the white marble of his "Tinted Venus" (1851-1856) with painted wax to simulate the translucency of skin. As the name implies, colour is applied very sparingly, with heightened touches to the hair, lips and eyes, the golden apple she holds, the hem of her garment and the tortoise at her feet. The form is pure Neoclassicism. How different to the Mary Magdalene (1896) of Georges Lacombe, a follower of Paul Gauguin, which is clearly influenced by the then-new interest in the early Romanesque.

The use of white marble had prevented sculpture from being too closely identified with reality, it also maintained the barriers between "high" art and the polychromatic sculpture of the fairground. Waxworks were to become increasingly regarded as "vulgar" entertainment, and puppetry, which was often presented alongside the waxworks, was similarly stigmatized. Something of this attitude continues to the present day.

The so-called "Sleeping Beauty" at Tussaud's, which breathes (originally by clockwork), is an 18th-century figure from the Paris exhibition of Dr Curtius and a fine example of the borderline between wax automata and puppetry that fascinated the Victorian public -- but is it art? If we find it difficult to answer questions like this today is it surprising that when Degas exhibited his "Little dancer of fourteen years" (originally in wax but with real ballet dress, shoes and hair ribbon) at the "L'Exposition des indépendents" in 1881, few critics could see the difference between it and the figures at the Musée Grévin. Many were outraged by the modelling of the face, which was described as having a "vicious snout." So extreme were the reactions that the figure

was almost universally condemned as being not only ugly but immoral.

If such a critical stance were to be maintained where would that place the work of artists of today such as Duane Hanson, Frank Gallo, Edward Reinholz, Jeff Koons or Alan Jones? We are now able to realise that what Degas was really interested in was the contrast between real materials and the modelled surface or "fracture" of the figure. He wasn't simply dressing a shop-window mannequin.

Samuel Butler, that most wise of writers, visited the Sacro Monte or New Jerusalem in Northern Italy, famous for its life-size wax figures depicting biblical scenes, and wrote "We cannot discuss such work with cheap commonplaces about Madame Tussaud's -- and for aught I know there may be some very good stuff at Madame Tussaud's."

In the early years of this century an artist like Max Klinger was not only painting his figures but inlaying the eyes with amber, and Camille Claudel's "Lost in thought," depicting a woman kneeling in front of the fire, is actually a night-light with a lamp to illuminate the fireplace and simulate the fire.

This exhibition is important because it focuses on a body of work that most people know relatively little about -- only those who have visited the Lady Lever Art Gallery at Port Sunlight, for instance, are likely to have heard of Desiré-Maurice Ferrary's large marble and bronze statue of "Salammbô" (1899), inspired by Flaubert's novel -- and also because it raises so many questions about the nature of Naturalism. Can the large roughly cut painted wooden figures of Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, normally considered Expressionist, be squeezed into this classification, and are the sculptures that Rodin and Picasso were making at much the same time Impressionist? If you think these questions are fairly easily resolved try making a clear distinction between Naturalism and Realism.

JEAN-BAPTISTE HUGHES. RAVENNA c.1885
Marble, bronze, *bluestone*, painted.
Courtesy Musée d'Arras

My apparent concern with taxonomy disguises my belief that the 19th-century tradition of puppets is so often derisively dismissed as merely naturalistic and is thus to be seen disadvantageously against "modern" or "avant-garde" counterparts. The stylized use of triangles and squares for eyes doesn't necessarily place the design of a puppet on a higher aesthetic plane or make it any more modern. Lambert D'Arc advertised his figures as having waxen heads, real hair and eye lashes. They also often had glass eyes and sometimes moving mouths as well. At what point can a figure be considered satisfactorily stylized as opposed to naturalistic?

Švankmajer's puppetry is obviously based on a deeply felt love of 19th-century traditional puppetry. Is Naturalism simply that which we choose to call naturalistic, and does even this concept continually change? This exhibition, or the book if you can't get to see it, may help you make up your mind.

Puppets in Theory
Some brief Notes

Graham Ley, Drama Department, University of Exeter

The connection of puppets with theory almost automatically brings to mind the theory of puppetry as we might find it, for example, in the writings of Henryk Jurkowski.[1] In this kind of theory, one of the major objectives is the determination of the sign system that creates meaning in the puppet theatre. Much as theories of human, live performance might concentrate on the distinction between actor and (represented) character, so Jurkowski draws attention in schematic terms to the distinction between the puppet and the manipulator/animator:

"The puppet theatre is a theatre art: the main and basic features that differentiate it from the live theatre are that the speaking and performing object makes temporal use of the physical sources of its vocal and driving powers, which are present beyond the object. The relationship between the object (the puppet) and the power sources changes all the time and these variations are of great semiological and aesthetic significance."[2] In this "basic" scheme, the manipulator occupies the position of the actor in the live theatre, and the puppet that of the character. But Jurkowski is aware that the situation is more complicated than that. The puppet is subject to a dual transformation in the theatre, in which it is animated in the first instance, but also granted a character. Jurkowski alludes to this important division in his discussion of the object-as-puppet, in which "the *object* passes through two stages of transformation. First it has to take on life, and second it must become a character, or vice versa. This is a double transformation ...."[3] Despite Jurkowski's apparent emphasis here on the "theatre of objects," this particular insight would seem to have a more general application to the representation of character by means of an intermediate, think of the puppet Dionysius in Ben Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair*, discussing and revealing its sexlessness in debate with a puritanical onlooker, then the basic theoretical point is clear."[4]

The semiology with which Jurkowski is so plainly involved brings to puppet theatre a theory which it can directly claim as its own, even if the difficulties of that theory make its wider acceptance a slow process. My own concerns arise from work I have been doing on theatrical theory in general, spanning much of the writing from Plato and Aristotle in antiquity up to the present day. By contrast, Jurkowski adopts an approach which places the history of writings on and allusions to puppetry in an essay on "Literary Views on Puppet Theatre," which he would distinguish from a contemporary theoretical scheme such as his own, semiological approach. Now I am not completely convinced that this implied division is altogether helpful, or that the implications of the phrase "literary views" are not a little misleading. It is of course true that a writer such as the poet Horace, whom Jurkowski quotes, realizes the value of the puppet as a metaphor of power and manipulation, and that in this he is typical of a tendency throughout antiquity, that we might trace in Magnin or Speaight. But Jurkowski also includes figures such as Kleist, Maeterlink, and Craig alongside Horace, Goethe, and Georges Sand; and in many of these cases a professional interest leads to the formulation of serious theoretical propositions about performance, in which puppets or marionettes are firmly involved. What may be advocated by these writers is not exclusively a theory of puppetry, still less a theory of a theatre of objects; but it is a theory of performance, which privileges the puppet above the human, live performer. So to call all these just "literary views" fails to acknowledge the longstanding theoretical status of puppetry, in its dialogue with human aspirations.

That those aspirations may be philosophical as well as artistic might be deduced from the moralizing environment in which many of the literary allusions seem to hover. It would be interesting, for example, to consider Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* as an inverted allegory of manipulation, which might well be inspired by the contrast between the great and little theatres of his era. What is literary is here satirical, and as such is both artistic and political: moralizing, perhaps, but in such a way that the moral becomes an extended, ironic commentary upon the human condition as it is found in societies. But if Swift is a tempting case for an ambitious analysis, there is a far plainer invitation to commentary in what must be considered the central allegory of the founder of European philosophy, namely Plato. In Plato, the literary is combined with the philosophical in prose compositions of extraordinary ingenuity and influence, which suffer a little under the generic description of "dialogues." It is certainly true that these compositions are representations of open and intent conversations, typically involving Plato's teacher, Socrates. As conversations, they include casual and incidental colloquial exchanges alongside intense and exacting "dialectic," aimed at a specific demonstration, or at the "conviction" of a philosophical opponent. Plato's prose style also extends to the elaboration of complex myths, of mystical descriptions of spirituality and the life of the soul, and to allegories of transcendence whose imagery and symbolism has exerted a profound fascination on succeeding generations.

I make these assertions not because I am in particular sympathy with Platonic philosophy, or with philosophical idealism in general, but because I wish to emphasize the intricacy of the relationship between what is "literary" and what is theoretical. Theory is born in literature, and it should be of some interest to this readership that in his allegory of the ascent of the human soul to a vision of true knowledge Plato has included a minor theory of puppetry. I am referring here to Plato's description in the *Republic* of the cave in which a number of human beings have been imprisoned.[5] This imagined scene is an illustration, at a climactic moment of the argument of his most ambitious dialogue, of what we might describe as "enlightenment," of an ability to see things as they really are, rather than as they appear to be. In the cave where the prisoners are kept a fire is constantly burning, which provides most of the light. The prisoners have been chained with their backs to this fire since childhood, and cannot turn around: "Between the fire and the prisoners there is a raised path, and along it a low wall has been built, just like the screens which the puppet-players place between themselves and their audience, above which they show their puppets." Along the length of this wall pass men carrying all kinds of objects, statues of humans and figures of animals, made of wood and stone and materials of every kind, which project above the wall. Some of these men are talking, and some are silent. What the prisoners see are the shadows of these objects, human and animal figures, cast by the fire behind them on the wall of the cave in front of them, and occasionally, since the cave has an echo, they seem to hear the shadows speaking, as the porters occasionally talk to each other. This projected world of shadows is for the prisoners the only visual reality they know.

The point of the allegory comes at the moment of liberation, when the prisoners are released and led slowly past the objects towards the light of the sun, as they initially fail to believe in what they see, but gradually glory in the actual world, and its illumination. This resistance of those accustomed to illusion and the world of appearances to the gradual acquisition of a true knowledge of "things as they really are" is Plato's demonstration of the difficulties faced by the philosopher in confronting the opinions of the majority of mankind. It is a stunning image, which might quickly bring to mind

that climactic moment of liberation in Beethoven's opera *Fidelio*, as well as intimating to cinematographers a contrast between the mechanical operations of their dark art and the beguiling possibilities of framing the splendour of daylight in celluloid. Plato consistently teases the artificers of illusion in the *Republic*, most famously, in the tenth book, attacking the theatre for presenting human beings in a manner which corrupts and weakens the reasoning part of the human soul. In this general context, which has given us the pejorative concept of *mimesis* as a description of what we should now call the arts of figurative representation, it is interesting that puppetry is surprisingly exempt from moral censure. The animated object, precisely because it is an arbitrary combination of the inanimate with the distinctly human, can be readily seen for what it really is, and in this respect it plainly differs from the live actor, who cannot in a similar manner be detached from the represented character. In what we might call the aesthetics of human conviction the puppet theatre is distinctly marked out from live performance in the earliest and most influential of dialectical European philosophers.

The kinds of exactitude that contemporary semiotics tends to claim for itself have in fact been practised in other contexts, with arguably as much seriousness of purpose. In the modern era, we have become accustomed to expect that degree of theoretical seriousness from practitioners themselves. Many of the more recent writers in Jurkowski's essay on "Literary Views" are, of course, of this kind, most notably Kleist and Craig. But in his brief review Jurkowski surprisingly does not mention Meyerhold, who in the summer of 1912 wrote what might easily be taken as a manifesto, "The Fairground Booth."[6] The omission is curious, because in that essay, as one of a number of related topics, Meyerhold presents an idea of two puppet theatres as an

theatre. Coincidence is not always of significance, but it is interesting that Craig's collaboration with the Moscow Art Theatre came in January of 1912, although his essay on "The Actor and the Über-marionette" dates originally from 1907. There is, however, a further coincidence of some considerable significance between Meyerhold's two puppet theatres of that essay and the theories of Otakar Zich to which Jurkowski rightly gives repeated attention in his essays.[7]

In an essay published in 1923 in Prague Zich debated the nature of puppets in a contribution to "an argument about two forms of perception: the puppets may be perceived either as living people or as lifeless dolls." In the first instance, "we stress their inanimate character. It is the material they are made of that strikes us as something we are really perceiving." In the second case, "we may conceive of the puppets as living beings by emphasising their lifelike expressions, their movements and speech, and taking them as real."[8] For Meyerhold, the distinction between two kinds of puppet theatre is by no means precisely the same in its emphases, but it acknowledges a similar division in perceptions of the puppet. The director of the first puppet theatre "wants his puppets to look and behave like real men," and to "emit sounds resembling the human voice." The second director, in contrast, "realizes that his audience enjoys not only the humorous plays which the puppets perform but also -- and perhaps more important -- their actual movements and poses which, despite all attempts to reproduce life on the stage, fail to resemble exactly what the spectator sees in real life." The second director also "realized that as soon as he tried to improve the puppet's mechanism it lost part of its charm." Meyerhold's conclusion is that "the puppet did not wish to become an exact replica of man," and he sees the puppet theatre of the second director as one in which "the puppet stood up for

Meyerhold's prime motivation in "The Fairground Booth" is unquestionably directed towards the live theatre, but this should not lead us to imagine that his reference to the aesthetics of puppetry at this point is merely an extension of the literary image. As Jurkowski observes, the modern era has provided "a unity of approach for puppets' and actors' theatre," which Jurkowski sees as a result of the influence of Craig, Brecht and Artaud. One might well add Meyerhold to this list. Why? In Jurkowski's words: "Today, when an actor enters onstage he firstly plays the role of an actor who, if needed, is able to create some stage characters with the use of every possible means of expression."[10] This is exactly the tenor of Meyerhold's manifesto, referring as it does to the primary significance of the performer as a skilled *presenter*, and objecting to the disappearance of the actor in the *character* in naturalistic theatre. It is the explicit illusion of puppetry that attracts the attention of ancient as well as modern theory, and we should not be surprised. Puppetry has held, and will always hold, its own intrinsic fascination. But the aesthetic certainty of representation that puppetry provides will always be comforting to any theory which is troubled by the problem of live performance.

Notes

1. H Jurkowski, *Aspects of Puppet Theatre*, edited by Penny Francis (London: Puppet Centre Trust, 1988). The essays to which I will refer are all in this volume.
2. Jurkowski, *Aspects of Puppet Theatre* p31. This definition is repeated, almost verbatim, from the slightly earlier essay "The Language of the Contemporary Puppet Theatre" (p 55), and in the later essay "The Sign Systems of Puppetry" (pp 79-80).
3. Jurkowski, p 41, from the essay "Towards a Theatre of Objects."
4. The "demonstration" occurs in *Bartholomew Fair*: Act V, scene 5.
5. Plato's reference to puppets at the beginning of book 7 of the *Republic* is mentioned briefly by Jurkowski in "The Sign Systems of Puppetry," at p 69. There are many published translations of Plato's *Republic*; I have given my own version of the few lines I have quoted.
6. A translation of "The Fairground Booth" is given by Ted Braun (ed.) in *Meyerhold on Theatre* (London: Methuen, 1969), pp 119-142.
7. Jurkowski discusses Zich's theories in two essays in *Aspects of Puppet Theatre*: in "The Language of the Contemporary Puppet Theatre," p 52, and at greater length in "The Sign Systems of Puppetry," pp 57-62.
8. I am quoting from the translations of given by Jurkowski at pp 57-58.
9. Braun, *Meyerhold on Theatre*, pp 128-129.
10. Jurkowski, p 43.

International Summer Academy
Technique Meets Fantasy – Fantasy Needs Technique: String Puppetry
Stuttgart, 10 Aug-6 Sept 97

This course addresses itself to professional puppeteers and those who have advanced experience in puppetry; relevant proficiency and skills are expected. "Each participant is to build independently a complete string puppet during the course applying the aims of the workshop in creative design and construction principles." Apply soon to Professor Albrecht Roser, Studio Roser, Urbanstrasse 49, D-70182 Stuttgart, Germany; tel 0711/226 35 09; fax 0711/226 25 86. Course languages are English and

SPECIAL EVENTS

BrUNIMA Annual Lecture 1997

The Rise of the Puppeteer: A Look at the Historical Development of the Role and Function of the Performer-Puppeteer, an informal, slide-illustrated lecture by Penny Francis, Saturday 3 May, at 7PM, on the Puppet Theatre Barge, **Blomfield** (not Blomfeld) Rd, Little Venice. See yellow insert for details.

The Puppet Barge also has performances of *Monkey Business*, a special show for the Canalway Cavalcade Weekend on the same day, at 2, 3, and 4PM.

COVENT Garden May Fayre and Puppet Festival

This annual event will take place in the garden of St Paul's Church, Bedford St, WC2, on Sunday 11 May. Celebrations start with a colourful procession at 10.30 AM and a special church service in honour of Mr Punch at 11.30 AM. There will be lots of P&J and other puppet shows until 5.30. Come and meet us at the BrUNIMA stand.

Puppet Up!

Blackpool Festival of British Puppetry 1997

This new puppet festival takes place on Friday 16, Saturday 17, and Sunday 18 May 1997. On the Sunday, Linda Herbert is conducting a session on Special Needs, with emphasis on puppets; for teachers, classroom assistants and anyone interested in the subject. The *Fantasy in Action* exhibition will be at the Grundy Art Gallery from 19 April.

The Guild AGM is in Blackpool on Saturday 17 May, and there will be a grand puppet parade through the town centre that morning. There will be a BrUNIMA stand-cum-bookstall. Further details should be sought from BrUNIMA Committee member Rachel Riggs, Dynamic New Animation, 12 Langland Gardens, London NW3 6PR; tel 0171 794 9616

Norwich Puppet Theatre Event

UNIMA President Sirppa Sivori-Asp will present a special performance of *The Far-Away Land* for UNIMA members on Sunday 17 August. This play, written by Gosta Kjellin, is based on a true-life adventure from World War II and concerns a doll separated from its owner when she escapes via Russia. It has never before been seen in England and will be performed in English (the translation was paid for by the Henson Foundation when it was performed at a recent New York festival). The play has been described as "exquisite" by Luis Z Boy, Norwich Puppet Theatre's artistic director. There will also be a brief meeting with Sirppa, and refreshments.

We should like to thank Luis very much for the invitation. The Theatre will be staging a Finnish Festival in August: further details from Norwich Puppet Theatre on 01603 629921.

Luis himself has recently been spending time in Helsinki directing Hans Christian Andersen's *Keisarin uudet vaatteet*, better known to us as *The Emperor's New Clothes*, for The Green Apple Theatre and taking a series of workshops. The Norwich Puppet Theatre will be taking three shows to the Madrid Children's Festival in May.

Members' Annual Meeting 97

It is intended this take place October/November at a central location. Suggestions welcome.

The Belgians Are Coming

Planning is still in its very, very early stages, but will coincide with the Covent Garden May Fayre in 1998.

Shared Events

What does this mean? The Committee thought that fruitful events might be organized with non-puppetry organizations. Already suggested are The Magic Lantern Society, the British Music Hall Society, and The Magic Circle. Please let us know if you have further suggestions.

Internet

I have been collecting material on The Little Players, Inc, an American puppet company run by Francis J Peschka and W Gordon Murdock. They have performed, among other things, witty operettas, *Phaedra*, for example, written in a macaronic pidgin of Italian, French, and Arabic, by the Alexandrian, Bernard de Zogheb. Last heard of in Huron, Ohio, does anyone know of their current whereabouts? Has anyone seen their work? That was to have appeared under a *Notes and Queries* heading. However, it occurred to me very late in the day that I might be able to retrieve the information on the Internet. After some trawling for the company, I came across a description of a short film called *Wombat* on the two puppeteers, but nothing else; neither was listed as having e-mail, but the U.S. telephone directory is available electronically, and Peschka's Little Rock (Arizona) address and telephone number came up immediately. I'll try to stay off this hobbyhorse for a while.

The UNIMA Congress in Budapest did in fact discuss the installation of a UNIMA electronic communications systems which would link up the computers of the Presidency, the General Secretariat, and national centres to the Internet, on which a page entitled UNIMA ELECTRONIC INFORMATION would provide a general, up-to-date News Bulletin as well as a list of e-mail addresses. This would be under the control of a special Communications Commission. A UNIMA session on this is due to be held shortly. Given the abiding complaint of poor communication within the organization, anything that helps improve matters, should be welcomed.

Puppetry Fiction

The street speciality, the trademark of Mickey Sabbath, the protagonist of Philip Roth's *Sabbath's Theater* (Vintage, 1996), is to perform with his fingers (marionettes are a bore -- "too blatantly metaphorical"). And it was his fingers, creating "all sorts of lascivious illusions," which led to his arrest and conviction for obscenity on the streets of New York in 1956. I should particularly like to have seen his "five-minute puppet adaptation of the hopelessly insane Nietsche's *Beyond Good and Evil*" and his cannibal puppet which ate his enemies on the stage.

A Guardian critic quoted on the front-cover describes the novel as "His funniest, filthiest and most profound novel. It is the book he was put on earth to write." Admirers of Philip Roth's earthy style will know what to expect, while readers of his ex-wife Claire Bloom's autobiography *Leaving a Doll's House* may see more than a passing resemblance between the author and his monstrous creation, the selfish and libidinous Mickey.

If you want an unusual treat see Tiplady's one-man *Hamlet*, performed with fingers plus other, non-Rothian parts of the anatomy.

By the way, Jeremiah Bembo, the efficient, kindly ("I will not harm them") hangman of Tim Binding's *A Perfect Execution* (Picador, 1996), comes from "infected" stock, a family of itinerant showmen. His grandfather was "The Great Bembo," a Victorian Punch-and-Judy man.

The Sun Shone at Colwyn Bay

Ray DaSilva

The main event of the enjoyable weekend organized by Chris Somerville was the auction of surplus puppets and other related bits and pieces, following the death of his partner, Eric Bramall. (Older readers will remember with pleasure the Colwyn Bay International Puppet Festivals in 1963 and 1968, organized respectively by Eric and Chris -- the '63 event being this country's first-ever such international event.)

Eric had asked that some material should go to be displayed at the National Museum of Wales, but other museums and collections will now also benefit. Spotted among the buyers were Mel Myland, The Wish-Tower, Eastbourne; Jill Purves of The Biggar Little Theatre Museum; Jane Phillips for The Puppet Centre Collection; and Eugene Lambert from Dublin. Bidding started briskly in the morning but soon slowed to a leisurely pace as Chris displayed each figure, relating anecdotes and offering side-attractions: "The person buying this puppet is welcome to a copy of the recording which accompanied it."

Chris explained that the primary aim of the auction was not to make money (although the theatre needed some repair-work) but to make some space, and also to find "good homes." He succeeded on both counts. Puppeteers from all quarters had come together under one roof with a common purpose: to pay respect to Eric Bramall and to perhaps buy something of his as a memento or to use in performance. Most people got something, and went away happy. Top price paid was £1,205 for a set of three 18" Lanchester marionettes from *The Gooseberry Mandarin* by Grace Dorcas Ruthenburg.

On Saturday evening Jane Phillips paid tribute to the work of Eric and Chris, drawing distinctions between commercial and subsidized companies, and then gave us an amazingly detailed review of the lives and performing activities of all the other contemporary Welsh puppeteers. The evening closed with a superb marionette cabaret by Chris Somerville. Next morning there was a performance (unfortunately missed by this reviewer) with rod puppets of Rumplestiltzkin by the Welsh-based Treasure Trove Puppet Company, directed by Steve Sharples. The design was by Michelle Quick, and the specially composed music by *Fools Jig*. Descriptions overheard from the smiling audience afterwards were "excellent," "well-designed," "smooth," "uncluttered." The weekend also saw the announcement of the Eric Bramall Harlequin, an award to be presented annually for the best contribution to traditional marionette skills. The sudden change to warm weather on the first day, reflected the atmosphere of the whole occasion. Chris reported afterwards that someone had asked "Will you do it again next year?"

Deadlines

This is important. The *Newsletter* **deadlines** are **24 April** for 1 May publication; **24 Aug** for 1 Sept; and **16 Dec** for 1 Jan.

The *Bulletin* **deadlines** are **1 June** for 1 July publication; **1 Oct** for 1 Nov; and **1 Feb** for 1 Mar.

These deadlines will be strictly maintained, and this will mean that members who are also subscribers to *ANIMATIONS* will receive puppetry news at the beginning of each month.

Errata

In the last Bulletin, No 93, the opening of ***Sir-Reel Švankmajer*** (pp 5-8) should read: "... called *Sir Reel Švankmajer and the Speaking Parts*. Honours and Surrealism might be thought antithetical, but I rather like the idea of Švankmajer with a K...."

Paragraph six of the item on the request from Dr Helga Werle-Burger in Lübeck (pp 12-13), should read: "...in the 1920s, who then performed with them for almost 20 years at various celebrations. In the 1940s he sold them to a Mr Munian...." Paragraph seven should read: "His son, born in 1937, took over from him and performed until around 1990.

"According to Mr Mani, the same puppets performed the same single programme for almost a century."

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BrUNIMA CONTACT ADRESSES

Hon President: John Blundall, Scottish Mask and Puppet Theatre, 8-10 Balcarres Avenue, Kelvindale, Glasgow G12 0QF. Tel 0141 339 6185 Fax 0141 357 4484

Chair: Ray DaSilva, 63 Kennedy Road, Bicester, Oxfordshire OX6 8BE. Tel 01869 245793

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General Secretary: Lorraine von Gehlen, Cross Border Arts, Wysing Arts Centre Fox Road, Bourn, Cambridge CB3 7TX. Tel 01954 718181 email lorraine@cba.eastern-arts.co.uk

Treasurer and Membership Secretary: John Phillips, 140 Barnsbury Road, London N1 0ER. Tel 0171 8334408

Editor of Bulletin -- to whom all submissions for publication should be sent: Robert Fowler, 44 Bexley Court, Reading Berkshire RG30 2DY Telephone 01189 576 528

Tailpiece to Colwyn Bay When collecting the puppets she had purchased at the auction, Jill Purves discovered that one figure was missing: Lot 12, a beautifully carved 20" marionette in powdered wig, made by Bywaters. If any purchaser collected this item by mistake, or can throw any light on the matter, Jill would like to hear. Telephone: 01899 220521.